



NEWS

www.baaqmd.gov

June 28, 2001
For Immediate Release

Contact: Ralph Borrmann 415 749-4791

10,000 Cars Scrapped 1500 tons removed from the air

The Air District's Vehicle Buy Back Program scrapped its 10,000th vehicle today. Scrapping these vehicles has removed 1,500 tons of air pollutants since the program began in 1996. The District's Vehicle Buy Back program purchases and scraps older vehicles that lack modern emission control systems and therefore produce more air pollution than newer cars. The program is completely voluntary and pays participating owners of eligible vehicles \$500 for their vehicles.

For each vehicle that is scrapped, 200 to 440 pounds of air pollutants are removed from the air. Among the air pollutants reduced by scrapping old vehicles are reactive organic gases and oxides of nitrogen that combine in heat and sunlight to form ground-level ozone--the main ingredient in smog. Scrapping cars also removes airborne particulates, which is gaining increased recognition for its contribution to respiratory diseases and ability to cause cancer. Air pollutants are known to aggravate cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses, contributing to bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, nausea, headaches, eye irritation and dizziness.

"Older vehicles are targeted in this program because even well-maintained older vehicles have significantly higher air emissions than most newer models. Older vehicles, especially 1973 and older vehicles which are now exempt from the SMOG Check program, can legally operate with air pollutant emissions that are 5 to more than 50 times as much as new cars," stated Air Pollution Control Officer Ellen Garvey.

-more-

The vehicle buyback program is funded through the Air District's Transportation Fund for Clean Air. The fund allocates a \$4 surcharge on Bay Area motor vehicle registration fees to projects that reduce emissions from motor vehicles. To qualify for the Vehicle Buy Back program, a vehicle must be in operating condition and have been registered in the nine-county Bay Area for the past two years.

###